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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Fifty-fourth session (1-19 March 1999)
Fifty-fifth session (2-27 August 1999)

Addendum

Programme budget implications of decision 4 (55)

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in decision 4 (55)

1. At its fifty-fifth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination adopted decision 4 (55), by which it decided that, in order to discharge its responsibilities under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, it would hold its fifty-eighth session, in March 2001, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and requested the General Assembly to take appropriate measures to implement the decision.

2. The Committee normally holds two three-week sessions a year in Geneva. However, in its decision, the Committee recalls that according to article 10, paragraph 4, of the Convention, the Committee's meetings should normally be held at United Nations Headquarters. The Committee further justifies its decision by the fact that some States parties, in particular developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, maintain diplomatic missions in New York but not in Geneva and may also encounter financial difficulties in attending meetings in Geneva.

B. Additional requirements

3. Resources for the meetings of the Committee in Geneva for the biennium 2000-2001 are included under section 22, Human rights, and section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium.[1] The requirements for holding the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in New York as compared with Geneva for the biennium 2000-2001 follow:

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Section 22, Human rights	*New York*	*Geneva*
	(United States dollars)	
Travel of staff	36 000	-
Four staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to service the session at United Nations Headquarters (travel, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses)		
Travel of representatives	214 700	164 400
18 members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (travel, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses)		
Total	**250 700**	**164 400**

4. The additional requirements for travel and daily subsistence allowance entailed by holding the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in New York would amount to $86,300. As mentioned above, no provision was included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 to meet these requirements.

C. Contingency fund

5. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a later biennium.

6. It is not possible, at this stage, to identify activities within section 22, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium to finance the costs of holding the fifty-eighth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in New York.

7. **Unless the General Assembly decides otherwise, the implementation of decision 4 (55) of the Committee would entail, therefore, an additional provision of $86,300 over and above the resources included in section 22, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. This provision would represent a charge against the contingency fund and as such would require a related additional appropriation.**

8. As regards the possibility of accommodating the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in New York in March 2001, it should be noted that the annual programme of meetings at Headquarters is particularly heavy during the first half of the year and peaks from February to June. It should also be noted that the Human Rights Committee, one of the human rights treaty implementation bodies based in Geneva, regularly holds one of its three annual sessions in March in New York (in 2001, from 19 March to 6 April).

9. Given the anticipated shortage of suitable conference facilities and services at Headquarters in the spring, it will not be possible to accommodate the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in March 2001 in New York. Therefore, it is to be understood that the exact timing of the fifty-eighth session of the Committee would be subject to consultations between the Committee and the Secretariat.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).